

Contributed

OUR BRIGHTSIDE LETTER.

Words Versus Deeds.

It must be admitted that there is a popular aversion to words. At our supper table, where there is no Autocrat, the young people were unanimous and clamorous in defense of deeds. Words were not worthy to be compared with deeds. Only deeds, they cried, are to be counted worth while. Only deeds fill life worthily and make history. And unkind things were said about words, as empty and useless, as airy nothings and often false and makers of mischief.

So the Foot of the Table had a trying time in a battle of words in defense of words against the Head and all the board of family debate. "Verba virumque cano," he said, and took up arms for that device. Words are themselves deeds, he affirmed, and are the expressions of will and energy, the tongue as truly and effectively as the hand. They have often been great deeds, and wrought for good and for evil upon human life, and turned the current of the history of nations. Words and a man, "verba virumque," words from the heart and the will of a man, of clear sight and strong faith and generous purpose, have been deeds of the mighty for the good of mankind.

Words are the means of conveying thought from one man to his fellow; and not only thought, but love and hope and courage and every emotion and affection that springs in the human breast. And this free and frequent communication, from mind to mind and heart to heart, makes brothers of all men, and every man is teacher and inspirer to his fellow, and all are brought into brotherhood, and elevated on higher planes of intelligence and morals, and common aims and efforts.

But what would deeds be without words to tell of them, to compare and measure them, to applaud them, to write them in history, and sing them in song, to continue their life and power to the years that come after? Moreover, it has been given to words themselves to preserve in their own forms so much of the history of the nations that use them, to tell of the origin of races and their inner life, their religion, their morals, their spirit, their habits and customs.

Of all the gifts of God to humanity, how inestimable is the gift of language! Was it a direct endowment in creation? Did it spring up from instinct and necessity, simple, rude, poor? However it came, is there any natural endowment to be compared with it? Thanks be to the great Giver for words! This is man's great distinction from the brutes of the field. Speech and language have brought knowledge and accumulated it. Words have crowned man with reason and taught him to think and to speak and to write, and have led him up to philosophy and science and poetry.

Do not words mean literature and make literature? Books and schools and libraries, are they not words? And the printing press, with its invitation to think, and to write, and its constant stream of words, and its unmeasured

benefits, using words to write laws and teach morals, and inspire to larger and better lives, and animate to deeds, worthy and good and heroic.

When God would teach man great lessons for his profit and happiness, he wrote with his own finger words, Ten Words, on tables of stone. They have preserved the race from degradation and extinction. There was One who said, "The words that I have spoken unto you, they are spirit and they are life." And he whose throne is a throne of grace has sent this message to us, "Take with you words, and return unto the Lord."

J. P. S.

MR. GREATHEART AND HIS CHARGES.

A Present Day Allegory For the Consideration of the Southern Presbyterian Church.

I stood one day with a Dreamer on a hill. Below us flowed a mighty river. Fields that had been watered with blood, now clothed in the innocent green of the springtime, smiled at us as we stood. There came a light of prophecy into the eyes of the Dreamer. He extended his arm and pointed to the city, which nestled among the trees on the bank of the river. And then he told me his dream. My own heart leaped to welcome the thought of my friend. His was a dream of love, and it was also a dream of justice.

Fifteen years rolled by. Again I stood on the hill beside the mighty river. Again I saw the fields that had been watered with the best blood of a nation. They were clothed in winter's white robe of peace. But the Dreamer had gone where all noble dreams are fulfilled. His gentle spirit lingered on the hillside, and I thought I heard again his loving voice as it told once more the dream.

And lo! as I looked the dream stood before me, realized in the lives of many. I saw the widow and the orphan, whose sad fate had stirred the loving heart of the one now gone. They were on a pilgrimage, and one walked with them like unto Mr. Greatheart. The little ones he bore in his arms, or led by the hand. The Mercys and the Christians he guided and counselled with many loving words and patient acts of kindness.

If a lion stands in the way, "Mr. Greatheart is a strong man, so he is not afraid of a lion." When Giant Maul would bar the path, even though the battle seems to be lost, and Greatheart beaten to his knees, he betakes himself to prayer. And always with patience and courage he fights the battle for his helpless charges, and wins the victory.

This is not a chapter from Pilgrim's Progress, but a true story of what is going on today at Fredericksburg, in the name of the Southern Presbyterian Church. It is astonishing how little the Church realizes the magnificent work that is being done by our Home and School. Year after year its appeals appear in our papers and before church courts. Some do not listen, others say, "It is a good thing in theory, but not practicable"; and a few give it their hearty support and loving interest. Of all the millions God has given our Church in trust for Him, it only asks for

\$25,000, to carry out its mission of love and justice. Can we not give this small sum as a thank-offering annually for the labors of those whose greatness among us has been proven, in that they have been "servants of all"?

The writer is of the opinion that the reason for our failure to fully supply the needs of this great and unique institution is, that the Church at large does not fully understand how wisely, economically and efficiently, it is being managed. Some indeed speak slightly of it, and even ministers, whose earnest sympathy it ought to enlist, are sometimes heard to refer to it in a fault-finding spirit.

Are we aware that no other denomination of Christians in America has such an institution? Do we realize that we have living among us a man who realizes daily the high ideals of Bunyan's greatest character? If there be a faithful preacher, struggling along on a pitiful salary, unable to lay aside a dollar for the evil days that come to all, worrying and wondering as to the future of his little ones when he shall be taken from them, let him lift up his head and take courage. One of these poor preachers, whose salary is but sufficient to keep his large family from starvation, said, recently, while visiting the Home, as he realized the advantages and privileges, of those in its care: "Were it not for my work, it would be better, far, if I could be taken away, for then my family would at least have the certainty of a good home, good education, and splendid Christian influences here."

Many a home missionary has to see his children grow up surrounded by the evil influences which call him to his lonely field, and many a foreign missionary has to feel all the degrading forces of heathenism exerted on his own little ones, while he labors to bring light into the darkness. At Fredericksburg the wise thought of one whom men loved, but still called a "Dreamer," has been crystallized into a living fact, and all the most precious influences of our church are there exercised upon the lives of the little ones of the missionary, and the widows and orphans of ministers who have been taken away.

God gave the Church a Ruling Elder, of wise business ability, of loving sympathetic nature, and of earnest consecration to a high ideal, in the person of Samuel W. Summerville. And God placed him where he is. Twenty-one widows, ninety children and the families of five missionaries compose the band of pilgrims our Greatheart is guiding day by day on their pilgrimage.

I hold no brief for Brother Summerville. I speak but of what I saw with my own eyes during a week spent with this work recently. I feel sure that if the whole Church could but see what I saw, and feel what I felt of the heart throbs of this faithful servant of God and His church, a prayer of thanksgiving would go up from every breast to the One who gave him to us for this work.

Shall this good work go on? Shall the plans of its wise committee for enlargement, the establishment of a missionaries' rest, and the acquisition of school property, fail for lack of funds? Never!